

Article on Navy

Theme - The Navy has two combat missions--projecting power ashore and sea control. The latter is the fundamental of the two. It has been neglected in US naval strategy and force planning but will become the Navy's primary focus if war with the Soviet Union breaks out.

I. Mohan

In 18__, A. T. Mohan wrote, "The influence of Sea Power on History." This work was an historical analysis of British use of sea power in the ____ and ____ centuries. It was instantly viewed as a justification for navies; and that use has persisted.

II. The Mohanian Theses

Sea power is the necessary concomitant of trade and hence of economic growth of trading nations. Sea power requires a network of bases and a fleet of such strength as to dissuade an opponent from challenging at sea; hence a capability to defeat an enemy battle fleet.

III. Validity of the Theses

As an historical analysis - valid.

As a proscription for the next century - increasingly invalid with time:

- A. Advent of the submarine - battle fleets no longer were the sole determinant of use of the seas by merchant ships.
- B. Advent of the military aircraft - battle fleets were even less the determinant of sea control.

- C. Advent of wider and more rapid communications and regard for international law - the threat of blockade or interference with merchant shipping became less credible.

IV. Why does the myth prevail?

A. Originally:

Kaiser

T. Roos

Both were looking for a rationale for expansionism--colonialism.

- B. General - suited the economic and political philosophies of the nations that were potential sea powers.

C. Fascination with combat vehicle.

The vehicle of war is designed to defeat the like vehicle of war.

Galley vs. galley

Cross bowman vs. cross bowman

Tank vs. tank

BB vs. BB

For the gladiator the chariot becomes an entity unto itself, not just a means to an end.

Common failing of military mentality is to lose sight of the end objective.

Common tendency of military is to continue to develop the vehicle well beyond its usefulness.

D. Fascination with the "offense"

War is a masculine profession.

Battle fleets on offense, seeking out and destroying enemy, are epitome.

Mohan's philosophy epitomized offense.

E. Budget justification.

Armies are relatively easy to justify - only their size and shape at issue.

Navies are more remote have limited political usefulness.

Once Mohan provided a winning justification - why change?

Today the offense is considered part of justification defense does not connote sufficient usefulness.

F. Dearth of naval strategists.

Military profession does not generate intellectuals easily; but armies more than navies -

Who are the strategic writers?

Clausewitz

Mohan

Mackinder

Corbett

Perhaps it's the very remoteness of naval operations from political objectives that discourages naval officers from intellectualizing.

V. What should the new strategy be?

A. Naval contribution to defense of vital national interests must be first concern.

1. Most likely and threatening is a war with Soviet Union.

a. Capability to project power with strategic nuclear weapons is first priority -

b. Beyond that sea control of SLOC to area of conflict is next because:

- (1) War cannot be sustained beyond our shores w/o sea control.
- (2) Potential contribution of projection of power forces is limited in a major war.

c. Sustaining war

(1) World Wars I and II hung in balance of sea control.

(a) Neither Kaiser nor Hitler prepared for interdiction campaign.

1. Battle of Jutland preparation by both sides-- inconclusive.

2. Schnaihorst, Greisneau, Bismarck prep by Hitler - 25(?) subs

Doenitz plea(?)

(b) On outbreak of each war Germans turned immediately to sub warfare.

(2) Today not appear Sov have intent to interdict.

(a) Do have capability.

(Compare with Hitler's)

(3) Concept that SLOC not necessary to such a war.

(a) Short war view

May be short but one important factor in that determination would be whether both sides could sustain conflict.

(b) Airlift new

(Statistics)

d. Limitations of projection.

(1) Airpower

(a) Allied a/c inventory in Europe is ____;
compares with ____ attack and ____ fighter
a/c on entire 6 CVs in Atlantic (and much
of VF and some VA must be retained for
defense of CV)

(2) Amphib - short of a Normandy not very important
due lack landing beaches.

(a) Considerable time to mount even division
scale assault--sea control essential to
move it.

(3) Risks - 4 CV needed to survive in heavily
contested environments where projection would
take place. CV is heart of sea control capability,
too. Could not risk 1/3 CV force in return for
limited # VA sorties or small scale amphib assault.

e. Sea control strategy

(1) No matter what US planning is; no matter how Sov
use their navy in beginning, US strategists are
bound to react in same way.

(a) Preserve our capability to fulfill the ultimate
need should it arise - protection of SLOC in
protracted conventional war.

(b) Could not afford to do otherwise short of a
true emergency requirement, e.g., devastating
blow to land based air power in Europe.

B. Contribution to less critical requirements.

1. Non-Soviet wars

- a. Generally projection of power is requirement; perhaps local area sea control (new weaponry)

- (1) Premium on speed of response more than quantity of air strike/amphib assault.

2. Peacetime show of force

- a. Threat of projection of power; or blockade/sea denial.
- b. Right place at right time premium.

VI. What is required to fulfill this strategy?

VII. What is U.S. Naval strategy today?

VIII. Why is strategy not coherent?